

# Northern Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	507933
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Coral Hales
<b>Setting Address</b>	Northern County Junior & Infant School, Richmond Rise, Fareham, Hampshire, PO16 8DG
<b>Telephone number</b>	023 92385613
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Northern Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Northern pre-school opened in 1994 and is situated in Northern County Infants School, Portchester, Hampshire. The group is committee run. It operates from two adjoining rooms close to the main reception area of the school. A maximum of 24 children aged from two to five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is the group's practice to accept children aged from two years-nine months. The setting is open from 08:45 to 11:45 and 12:30 to 15:30 in term-time only.

There are currently 57 children on roll. Of these, 36 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and systems are in place to support those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four members of staff. All hold Level 3 early years qualifications. The group are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and are supported by advisory staff from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted and they are encouraged to take responsibility for meeting their own toileting needs. For example, they freely access the toilet facilities and are generally independent in their practices. Children play in a clean and well-maintained environment and positive steps are taken to prevent infection, for example, tables are wiped before snack. Their welfare is maintained because all staff have appropriate first aid certificates and can respond to accidents quickly and appropriately.

Children are well nourished and are offered a good selection of healthy snacks during the session and their preferences are observed. Children select dried and fresh fruit and vegetable pieces for snack, for example, small pears, oranges, salad items and raisins. As they sit and enjoy their snack together they begin to become aware of different foods and why they are good for them. Children help themselves to easily accessible drinking water throughout the session and they enjoy milk with their snack.

Children benefit from having daily opportunities to enjoy physical play and activities in the fresh air. They increase their balancing and climbing skills as they use equipment in the hall and when balancing on beams in the garden, giggling when they fall off. Children have free access to the outside area and their positive attitude to exercise ensures that they have lots of fun as they for example, play in the sand, ride bikes, paint pictures and chat with school friends over the fence.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The pre-school has generally good systems in place for ensuring the safety of the children and the premises at all times. Children's safety both indoors and outdoors is appropriately maintained, for example radiators are protected by covers and suitable supervision ensures they are kept safe whilst having the freedom to explore their surroundings. They learn to keep themselves safe, through good supervision and sensitive reminders, for example they are gently reminded not to run and to be careful of others around them. Children take part in emergency evacuations and these are suitably recorded.

Children use a wide range of good quality toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. These are clean and well-maintained and are set out to allow children to access them independently within a safe environment.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted and safeguarded because staff demonstrate a good understanding of child protection issues. They have attended child protection training and are knowledgeable about the procedures to follow if they have concerns. The child protection policy refers to the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. This is made available to parents.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

All children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enjoy themselves at the pre-school. They are comfortable, happy, settled and well-occupied throughout the session. The younger children are well supported and staff use their knowledge to ensure activities are geared at their level of understanding. Parents are informed of their progress although no formal record system is in use.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff's sound knowledge of child development benefits the children significantly. They have a good understanding and a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use a good range of teaching methods to promote children's learning and progress. They take time to find out what interests each child and what he or she knows and can do and build on this information. This allows them to plan and provide a variety of activities and opportunities to help the children make good progress in all areas of learning. Plans show the learning objective however, they do not clearly show how children's learning will be achieved. Staff evaluate activities and use these to inform future planning. Staff are consistently interested and involved with the children and listen carefully to what they have to say. They are motivated and caring and children achieve well because staff provide an inviting and stimulating environment for them.

Children work productively because staff have created a calm environment, and children ask questions and generally make their own decisions. Their interest, involvement and learning is promoted because staff consistently interact, however children's learning is not always effectively extended. Assessments are completed for the funded children, however, these are not dated and therefore do not clearly track or show progress. These are shared with parents.

Children have good relationships with their peers and enjoy playing together and are keen to take part in all activities. They also learn by participating in many day-to-day domestic routines as well as from particular tasks. Children are developing independence and are able to access resources for themselves, using their initiative and begin to take responsibility for their own learning. They become engrossed in their play for example, as they play with the small world farm. Colour photographs relating to animals encourages and improves children's vocabulary and general knowledge. Language skills are well promoted by staff as they constantly engage the children in conversation, for example at snack time and as they play. They recognise their name cards as they self-register and opportunities are provided for mark making. Children enjoy taking part in foam play and confidently tell the inspector that it feels soft and ask her to put her fingers in it to feel what its like. Children are involved in a broad range of developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities which generally provide good levels of challenge. They show good levels of imagination as they practice their nativity play and as they pretend to be builders in the role play area. The outdoor area is very effectively used as a learning experience and children use this on a free flow system throughout the session, this allows them to observe the weather, watch birds or develop their physical skills on bikes and balancing beams. Children are aware of others and know that they may have differing beliefs, cultures and traditions. Overall, children make good progress in their learning and achievement given their capability and starting point.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children benefit significantly from the friendly and effective relationships that are in place between the staff and their parents. A selection of information relating to the setting is given to parents and effective systems ensure children quickly settle into the group. A complaints policy is in place, however this is not fully in line with new guidance and does not clearly inform parents of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Parents are welcomed into the pre-school at all times and feel happy to discuss their child's needs with all staff. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported by all staff. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works in close contact with parents and outside agencies as appropriate to ensure their needs are well met. Children and staff are learning how to 'sign' and are building up a range of vocabulary which they enjoy using. Informative and helpful paperwork and relevant documents are shared.

Children are looked after in a caring environment where they are valued and treated with respect and equal concern. They are frequently praised and therefore gain in confidence and self-esteem. This is very well promoted by staff who ensure that they celebrate all children's personal achievements with them. Good systems are in place to support children whose first language is not English. All children learn about diversity through a suitable range of play provision and planned activities. They experience festivals, for example, Diwali and special religious events such as Christmas.

Children are interested, involved, and generally well occupied in their play and learning. They respond generally well to the clear boundaries for behaviour and interact well with their peers. They begin to share and take turns and negotiate with each other. Any behaviour issues are quickly dealt with by the skilled staff who intervene as issues arise and help children to begin to manage their own behaviour. They behave well in response to warm encouragement and praise. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They are generally well informed about their child's daily activities as this information is shared via the regular newsletter that is sent out. Verbal information about the Foundation Stage and the nursery curriculum is given during the home visit and shared throughout the child's time at the group. This allows parents to gain an understanding of how children learn. Records of children's achievements and progress are kept and are available to share with the parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The children are well cared for in a safe and organised environment. They benefit from well-deployed staff, who consistently support, motivate and encourage. This helps children to feel secure and they show good levels of confidence.

Children's welfare is well promoted and supported by policies and procedures, some of which are currently being reviewed and updated to ensure all contain correct information. Documentation is generally well managed and maintained and is available for inspection. Space within the rooms is organised to meet children's needs and the outside area is very effectively used to maximise play opportunities for them. Group sizes are generally effective, however when children are required to sit together as a group for example, at story time they become distracted and restless. This means that staff cannot always use this time effectively.

Leadership and management is good. The supervisor and her team are committed to developing the provision of care and education for children and the committee offer support. Staff work together really well to ensure the smooth running of the group. Appropriate staffing and employment systems are in place, which ensure all staff are checked, cleared and monitored at the beginning of their employment and throughout their career at the group. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities and appraisals help to identify their training needs. Staff meetings allow them time to discuss planning, children's progress and future events. They attend workshops, cluster meetings and liaise with the local authority and this enables them to monitor and reflect on the educational provision and their practice. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection the staff were required to address recommendations relating to documentation. Policies and procedures are now maintained to ensure that systems are followed when staff are appointed. The medicine book and fire log book and policy for lost or uncollected children are all now in place. This ensures that staff and parents are informed and children's safety and welfare is maintained. The complaints policy however is not fully in line with new guidance and will continue as a recommendation following this inspection.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review and update the current complaints policy to ensure it is in line with new guidance and share this information with parents
- monitor and review the organisation of the session to ensure that large group time is managed effectively

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop plans that clearly identify how children will learn. Ensure all areas of learning are effectively promoted and that children's learning is effectively extended
- review the current assessment systems to ensure that children's learning is effectively monitored to show progress.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)